

Board of Vocational Rehabilitation January 6, 2015

(Original meeting scheduled for December 15/16 2014 cancelled due to winter storm)

Members and others present at each DDN site (Board members names bolded):

Pierre: **Tim Neyhart; Melissa Flor; Eric Weiss;** Mary Livermont ASPIRE staff; and Colette Wagoner; BVR staff.
Sioux Falls: **Matt Cain; Brett Glirbas; Colleen Moran; Patty Kuglitsch;** Rick Norris and Pat Reiter (interpreters).
Rapid City: **Chad Maxon;** Margie Helgeson; Rhonda Lynch; Catherine Greseth.
Mitchell: **Darla McGuire.**
Aberdeen: Vacant.
Spearfish: Dr. Greg Cooch.

Missing members: Lisa Sanderson; Kim Hoberg; Jolleen Laverdure; Carol Kirchgesler; Kendra Gottsleben.

OPENING ACTIONS: Welcome and Introductions: Brett Glirbas, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 1:10 pm and asked everyone to introduce themselves at each DDN site. He asked if there were any changes to the meeting agenda; hearing none – **MOTION MADE (M) TO APPROVE THE MEETING AGENDA AS MAILED, SECONDED (S) AND CARRIED (C).** Brett moved to the Executive Committee meeting minutes from November 20, 2014. He identified a motion in the minutes to approve funds in support of the Board's membership to the SD Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities and a small donation for a total expenditure of \$100.00. **MOTION TO APPROVE THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 20, 2014, MSC.** Brett asked for motion to approve the second set of Executive Committee meeting minutes – **MOTION TO APPROVE THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES FROM DECEMBER 19, 2014, MSC.**

TIME FOR PUBLIC COMMENT: No public comment was provided.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: There were none.

FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2014 YEAR END REPORT: Bernie referenced the PowerPoint handout that was included in the December 31st mailing. He spoke to the federally required data submitted to Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), and noted which reports were due quarterly, semi-annually and annually. Bernie provided the RSA website (<http://rsa.ed.gov/>) to review annual reports for all states, and if interested, you can compare how the state agency (Division) does compared to other state agencies in serving individuals with disabilities. For example, the Division serves more SSI recipients when compared to the national average, in addition to having higher SSI and SSDI employment outcomes (individuals on SSI or SSDI closed successfully). Other year end findings reflect that the Division has greater employment rates for those in Supported Employment and transition age youth as compared to other states. He spoke to the collected information and having the ability to see "trends". He reported that applying for services e.g., changes in the economy having the greatest impact = when the economy is good, less people seek VR services. He referenced the "Trends in Applications by Office" slide and noted that the two offices with the most change were Rapid City and Sioux Falls. He spoke to a new element being tracked on students with disabilities. This element identifies students with disabilities not on an IEP or 504 Plan, students with disabilities on an IEP, and students with a disability on a 504 Plan. This assists the Division in identifying students with disabilities and determining what other supports might be utilized. Other data elements identified include: Social Security Administration Status at application, source of referrals, and primary impairment of eligible individuals. The age group of applicants has changed when comparing FFY 2013 to FFY 2014, with the baby boomer age groups gaining in applications (including age groups of 54+, 50-54, 45-49, and 40-44). Trends in successful closures have risen steadily since a drop in FY09 (which was a time of high unemployment). Bernie invited members to contact him with questions once they had more time to review the PowerPoint.

STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL (SILC) UPDATE: Bernie reported that the SILC met on December 3rd in Ft. Pierre. He explained that the SILC falls under the Rehabilitation Act and it has specific composition requirements similar to the Board. Bernie stated he was appointed by the Governor to serve on the SILC, as well as Matt Cain, who serves as a representative of the Centers for Independent Living directors. He spoke to the two streams of funding for the Centers for Independent Living (state and federal) and noted some of the reports provided by each Center to the SILC. Information

reported includes: number of consumers served, core services provided, Home Modifications and Assistive Devices provided, and Telecommunication and Assistive Devices provided. He shared that an independent living specialist manual is being developed by the Division along with the assistance of Independent Living Choices staff. He reported that three individuals will be attending the 18th Annual SILC Conference January 17-20 in San Diego, California. At the last meeting new officers were elected which resulted in the following: Dave Miller/Chairperson, Monte Tschetter/Vice Chairperson and Craig Eschenbaum/Member-At-Large. The next meeting is March 19th in Ft. Pierre.

ASPIRE – PROMISE GRANT UPDATE: Mary Livermont reminded members that at the previous meeting she reported on the recruitment phase. The first wave was a dissemination of 165 letters to the target population of youth between the ages of 14 and 16 and on Social Security Income (SSI) in Rapid City and Sioux Falls. In South Dakota, there are approximately 650 youth in this category. The second wave will target the northeastern part of the state (Aberdeen, Sisseton, Mobridge, Watertown, Brookings, Crow Creek and Pierre). There are 40 individuals enrolled (20 receiving ASPIRE interventions and 20 receiving usual services) with an expectation of 120 enrollees from South Dakota (total enrollment for all states in the consortium is now at 150 youth). Fourteen of South Dakota's 40 enrollees are Native American youth living off the reservation. Mary explained that the project must have permission to reach out to youth residing on the reservations. Currently, permission has been received from Crow Creek and Sisseton, with pending approval from Pine Ridge and Standing Rock. The estimated numbers of youth living on the reservations meeting the target population are: Pine Ridge/91; Rosebud/47; Cheyenne River/30; Yankton/16; Standing Rock/16; Sisseton/Wahpeton/15; Crow Creek/12; and Lower Brule/4. ASPIRE has an advisory committee made of youth with disabilities, service providers, parents, and state agency representatives. ASPIRE intervention services will be provided to all youth in the six states of the consortium. Members were reminded that this is a research project with very controlled methods. Thus, ASPIRE interventions are only provided to the youth and families who are in the ASPIRE Services Group (treatment group) and the control group consist of youth and family who receive what has been termed "Usual Services", and they do not receive any extra services but have access to a resource list that is provided to them, as well as access to the website. The "interventions" services include: training and information for parents and families; benefit specialists services; paid employment opportunities while in high school; self-determination training for

youth and families; financial management education and training; and case management services. A few road blocks were identified as work continues, e.g., wrong phone numbers listed/trying to locate individuals; connecting with families; no shows and rescheduling appointments. A meeting is scheduled next week with Mary, Bernie and Secretary Emery, Secretary of Tribal Relations, to talk about the program.

INDICATOR 14 – POST-SCHOOL OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES. Melissa introduced Dr. Greg Cooch, Black Hills State University, explaining that they have worked together since 2006 on the post school outcomes survey. No information was being gathered prior to eight years ago on students with disabilities receiving special education services leaving high school. Now each state is mandated to collect specific data. Cooch referenced the PowerPoint presentation, which was mailed to members last week. He spoke to the survey, number of years conducted and having the ability to do a five year comparison of student engagement, type of exit, disability, ethnicity, and gender. He noted Indicator 14 Post-School Outcomes is defined as: percent of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had Individualized Education Program (IEPs) in effect at the time they left school, and were enrolled in:

- A. Higher education
- B. Higher education or competitively employed
- C. Higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school.

Dr. Cooch explained the definitions utilized for the survey, e.g., higher education, competitive employment, post-secondary education or training, and other employment. The 2012-13 exit data reflected a total of 395 respondents (60% response rate), of which 46 responders were enrolled in "higher education" (11.6%); 237 respondents were engaged in "competitive employment" (60%); and 22 respondents were enrolled in "some other post-secondary education or training" (5.6%); and 32 respondents were engaged in "some other employment" (8.1%). Some noted trends are that the number of students engaged in competitive employment has improved every year since 2008-09; and the number of total disengaged between 2008-09 and 2012-13. For hard to find exiters (e.g., minority, dropouts) Special education directors were contacted and the schools conducted the survey vs. only using mailings and phone interviews. He went into

further detail about comparison of exiters by "type of exit", "type of disability", "ethnicity" and "gender". A few general trends observed:

- Exiters that drop out of school are more than 3 times more likely to be disengaged than those with a high school diploma;
- Exiters that aged out are 3½ times more likely to be disengaged than those with a high school diploma;
- Exiters labeled Emotionally Disturbed (ED) are approximately twice as likely to be disengaged than all other disability categories; and
- American Indians are 2½ times more likely to be disengaged than all other exiters statewide;

Dr. Cooch spoke to the relationship between a student working more than 20 hours a week and more than a three month period; this reflects as a more positive predictor of becoming engaged (student has a better chance of going on to post-secondary education, employment, training or a combination). In response to a question, Dr. Cooch referred to the results from several years ago and the 'odds ratio' and when looking at youth who were engaged in one or more activities such as Catch the Wave, Youth Leadership Forum, Project Skills, or Self Advocacy, they had a better chance of going onto post-secondary education or being employed. Melissa explained that for research purposes the one item that has not been defined in terms of duration or intensity of activity is "Self Advocacy". A student could attend a semester on self advocacy vs. attending a two-day workshop; it has yet to be defined. Before ending, Melissa added that the Office of Special Education asks students why they are not working or attending post-secondary education. This information could be helpful as development of strategic plans for improvement.

BREAK

INTRODUCTIONS OF STAFF: Eric introduced Margie Helgeson, VR District Supervisor, Rapid City. Margie introduced Rhonda Lynch, Senior Rehabilitation Counselor. Rhonda was asked to speak about her involvement with the Division's Futures' Initiative. Futures' is an internal leadership succession training program implemented eight/nine years ago. Staff members apply and interview. If accepted, it is a three year commitment. All individuals identify a project of interest to work on, plus other possible assigned activities, while maintaining caseloads. There are currently five individuals in the Futures' Initiative. Rhonda highlighted a number of activities that she has been involved in with the Futures'

Initiative: development of a case file review tool; completion of case file reviews; developed an eligibility guidelines tool; Person Centered Thinking Coaching; certified in competitive employment for those with mental health issues; quality assurance training; participated in interviews for counselor positions; and attended supervisor's trainings. Eric and Bernie responded to questions pertaining to the application process and number of staff in the program. Next, Margie explained the Workforce Diversity Network (WDN) of the Black Hills. This is a business led organization that provides technical assistance to employers and promotes hiring people with disabilities. Margie introduced Catherine Greseth as the newly hired Director. Catherine shared that she started her career in television, has worked in various states, most recently working in the marketing field with nursing homes. She identified herself as a person with a disability (visual impairment). Her work will include assisting employers to connect with appropriate resources, addressing myths and stereotypes about people with disabilities. The last three weeks she has spent time in the field and reviewing the website and Facebook pages. She explained WDN covers the Black Hills region (Buffalo to Pine Ridge). WDN started as a grassroots effort in Rapid City, and the group successfully applied for the Division's Request for Proposal to lend support to business led organizations to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Catherine was asked about reaching out to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. The response provided was that she received contact information of a group the day before and she will be in touch with them. Catherine's contact information: work phone: (605) 787-2590; website: <http://workforcediversitynetworkbh.org/> and email: Director@workforcediversitynetworkbh.org

DIVISION DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Eric commented on Leo Hallan's passing on December 4th and recognized him as an advocate, mentioning a few of the activities he was involved in. A card will be sent to the family on behalf of the Board. Legislative Session: It will begin January 13th and at this point the Department has no bills to introduce. Division's Budget: Each year the Division works with Bureau of Finance and Management to prepare the Division's budget request. In past years, a small increase was requested in the area of client services for the vocational rehabilitation program. However, last year no request was made for an increase in state dollars because the Division had the necessary funds to match federal dollars, and it will be the same for the 2016 budget cycle. The Division is projecting with a good economy and unemployment rates down; the number of applications will go down. Currently for FY2015, the Division has

seen an increase in applications as compared to the same timeframe last year. This is due mostly to the VR counselors' work with referral sources, e.g., school districts, special education teachers and talk about vocational rehabilitation services. Administrative Hearing: The Division is federally required to share copies of due process hearing decisions with the Board. A copy of a decision was mailed to the full board outlining an applicant's appeal of an eligibility decision. The fair hearing officer ruled in favor of the Division that the individual was not eligible for vocational rehabilitation services (disability was not a substantial impediment to employment). Fall Conference: was held in Aberdeen on October 7-9, entitled "Putting the Pieces Together". There were over 165 attendees and over 200 attendees at the luncheon. The Fall Conference is the primary annual training for vocational rehabilitation staff, which also has providers, state/tribal agencies, and school district representatives in attendance. Next year's conference will be held in Sioux Falls on October 13-15; with a focus on mental health issues. Eric reminded members that if they are interested in attending this type of training, their expenses would be covered by the Board.

Employment Works Taskforce: The Division is exploring work experience opportunities for students with disabilities to have in state government. This coincides with one of Governor Dugaard's initiatives to have the state of South Dakota become a model employer of people with disabilities. Kim and Bernie have been working with targeted school districts and trying to assist with making connections with school personnel, state office personnel and vocational rehabilitation counselors. Request for Proposals were issued in September to community support providers to expand supported employment services for individuals who have intellectual disabilities working primarily in segregated employment and for individuals with intellectual disabilities under the age of twenty-four. Ten proposals were received and 8 contracts have been awarded; the Division is utilizing funds under the Rehabilitation Act, Establishment, Development or Improvement of Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs). Most of the proposals were seeking funds for additional staffing, targeting the two groups. Tim inquired about the CRP's hiring new staff and the training intentions, and Eric responded that the Division has had minimal conversations at this point. Tim asked if the Client Assistance Program (CAP) could be involved and would appreciate the opportunity to participate. The Division was open to this. Employer Outreach Program: Eric spoke to the "Ability for Hire" campaign and the contract with Epicosity, a Sioux Falls marketing firm. He spoke to a meeting held on December 12th with Epicosity staff and the Board's Public

Awareness Committee members. Another "GoToMeeting" is scheduled on January 12th, and if anyone wants to participate, they can do so. This will allow members to see what has been created and hear about the future of the project. Eric feels that it's important for members to participate and provide feedback. If anyone wants information on how to participate, or if they cannot attend and would like to view the materials, please be in touch with him or Colette.

Brett asked Eric to update members on the status of the Annual Report. Eric explained that staff submitted the report on December 31st to the Governor and RSA Commissioner. No feedback or questions have been received regarding it.

STAFF UPDATES AND CONTINUED CONVERSATION

Governor's Awards and Ceremony: Staff referred to the handout mailed to members in last week's packet. The handout provided the history of the awards, e.g., variety of awards, sponsors of the ceremony, when held/different venues, who presented the awards, and who reviewed the nominations prior to submitting recommendations to the Governor's office. Consensus was to disseminate the nomination packet early in March to avoid conflicts with the solicitation of the NDEAM Request for Proposals and possibly the solicitation for Board and SILC vacancies. There was also agreement that having the presentation of the awards in the Rotunda be continued, if possible, and the time of year is good (September/October). A suggestion was made to host a board meeting in conjunction with the ceremony to allow more members the opportunity to attend. Eric supported the idea and noted the need to coordinate the date of that board meeting with the event. National Disability Employment Awareness Month: Staff reported that the NDEAM Request for Proposal is typically disseminated the end of January with a due date the end of February. Staff explained that there is a review committee for the Governor's Awards and NDEAM. Each consists of BVR, B/SBVI, and SILC members. Patty, Darla and Tim agreed to serve on the NDEAM review committee. Staff was asked to disseminate an email and ask for reviewers for both committees and to include the B/SBVI and SILC.

CLOSING ACTIONS: Future Agenda Items: Brett inquired about the Person Centered Thinking training for members brought up at the previous meeting. First, it was mentioned hosting the training in the evening for those who were interested. Then several members voiced a preference for having an introductory presentation on PCT incorporated into an actual board meeting, perhaps focus on

the one page profile piece and limiting it to 1 ½ to 2 hours. Staff was asked to visit with Lisa Sanderson about providing the training, and Darla mentioned that her organization also has staff trained on PCT. Other topics to include: Epicosity update; Tim mentioned that Bill Molseed provided an overview of WIOA activities under the Department of Labor and Regulation at another meeting which was informative. Schedule Next Meeting: Consensus was to host the next meeting in Sioux Falls either late March or early April. **MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 4:50 PM, SC.**